

Help all youth thrive: Fund community restorative justice programs!

Dear Seattle City Councilmembers,

As you vote on Seattle's budget for 2020, you have the opportunity to demonstrate your support for communities of color, especially black and brown youth, by allocating City money for the restorative justice programs put forward by Councilmember Kshama Sawant in collaboration with our community:

Creative Justice, Community Passageways' Youth Consortium, and Rainier Beach Action Coalition's Corner Greeters programs have all had life-changing impacts on hundreds of youth of color, with positive effects rippling throughout families and neighborhoods all across Seattle.

Seattle has made progress on paper towards addressing the long history of racism which has devastated communities of color, including passing an important Zero Youth Detention goal that recognizes the need for investments in restorative justice as an alternative to incarceration. At the same time, the \$233 million youth jail is nearing completion in the Central District and the Seattle Police Department is currently out of compliance with the federal consent decree on accountability. Both of these provide stark reminders of how far the City has to go on this issue.

City Councilmembers can take an important step in this direction by funding the following community-based, black and brown youth-led restorative justice programs:

- ★ \$300,000 for Community Passageways' Youth Consortium program to develop black and brown youth from diverse social, economic, language, ethnic, and educational backgrounds into politically engaged community leaders.
- ★ \$122,600 for Creative Justice a community-based arts and youth development program, that also serves as a recognized alternative to incarceration in King County, which uses art to increase understanding of the root causes of incarceration, like systemic racial bias and other forms of oppression. At the same time, it strengthens the skills and behaviors that allow us all to make positive life choices, speak truth to power, and build supportive community to dismantle the school to prison and deportation pipeline.
- ★ \$100,000 for the youth-generated Rainier Beach Action Coalition's Corner Greeters program, a non-arrest crime reduction, autonomous community safety project that transforms spaces most prevalent for youth crime and organizes around Restorative Justice issues.

All youth deserve the opportunity to thrive. An investment in community-based restorative justice programs ensures our city achieves our stated goal of zero youth detention and creates pathways for all youth to thrive—especially those youth of color most marginalized by economic and racial inequity. Our city is growing rapidly but not all children and families are benefiting from the economic boom. Our most vulnerable youth are being forced through the school to

prison and deportation pipelines. Programs like Creative Justice, Community Passageways, and Corner Greeters provide youth with safe, healing-engaged spaces to invest in their selves and communities and develop pertinent life skills for their future.

We call on City Councilmembers to fully fund Creative Justice, Community Passageways' Youth Consortium, and Rainier Beach Action Coalition's Corner Greeters programs in Seattle's 2020 City Budget.

Sincerely,

Nikkita Oliver, Creative Justice

Dominique Davis, Community Passageways/Youth Consortium

Surge

Mazaska Talks

Block the Bunker

No New Youth Jail

La Resistencia

Trans Women of Color Solidarity Network

Be Seattle

Last Real Indians

El Comite

Truevine of holiness Missionary Baptist Church

Bethany United Church of Christ

Seattle MLK Jr. Organizing Coalition

Kadima Reconstructionist (Jewish) Community

Puget Ridge Homeschool

Anti-Hate Alaska Junction